Research in Emergency Medicine in Pakistan: The Need for a Strategic Approach

Sir,

The author has presented a helpful account of the need for an improvement in the research culture in emergency medicine in Pakistan. The individual improvement entities that are suggested are all reasonable and are all likely to result in a better situation; however, a more strategic approach might lead to more long lasting and sustainable improvements. The first and foremost step in any strategy would ideally be curriculum development. A curriculum should be developed for academic trainees in emergency medicine in Pakistan, based on the emergency medicine needs of the population in Pakistan. The curriculum should emphasise the importance of trainees producing adequate output in terms of research in emergency medicine.

Research in any new field is challenging and one of the challenges that needs to be overcome is getting the research published. For that reason, Shahid is correct to suggest that a new journal might be required. The other barriers that need to be overcome are inadequate time and lack of funding. Time is always at a premium in emergency medicine and research is, therefore, constantly at risk of being an important priority but never an urgent one. For this reason, academic units in emergency medicine should ideally be developed in Pakistan - institutions as well as individuals would then learn the necessary skills in emergency medicine research. Lack of funding is the last barrier that needs to be overcome - and funding is often difficult to obtain in this specialty. These barriers are significant but not insurmountable - however there is no question but that they need to be overcome to further the cause of academic emergency medicine in Pakistan.

REFERENCES